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P'ing-chiao-tsun is the pseudo-name given to our village, the real name of which is for a certain purpose better disguised. It is chosen as our field of investigation not because it is a good sample. When so little is known of the social conditions of the various regions in China, it is very difficult indeed to speak of sampling in any sociological study. The present village is chosen for its location, which is not too far away from the university campus or too near to be influenced by a single institution. It is chosen even more because the principal of its school is an old acquaintance of one of our department assistants. /21/

Back in the days in the year of 1930-31 when the Department of Sociology and Social Work of Yenching University first established its Ch'ingho Social Experimental Station, P'ing-chiao-tsun was known to us. When the Ch'ingho Station withdrew what was left of its work from the village some time in 1935, the Department of Sociology of National Tsinghua University established its field station in this village until the summer of 1937. The villagers and their leaders had been thus quite prepared for any sociological investigation from the outside when we "rediscovered" the village in one of our field trips in the winter of 1938-39.

We had been looking for a new field ever since the Ch'ingho Station was closed down in 1937. It was, however, only by accident that we met the school principal and decided to have the village as our sociological field. Negotiations with the principal and through him with the village leaders were very laborious in the days from February 1939 to June of the same year. As we finally agreed to subsidize the school, we were led by the principal to meet the head of the *lien-pao* in his office in another village. A meeting with the *pao* and *chia* heads, leaders of our village, was arranged in July, 1939. Faculty- and student-investigators all participated. After all these courtesy calls we were led to visit homes of villagers who were very friendly to our chief informant and "liaison officer", the principal of the village school. In these early visits we tried to be friends to our villagers and engaged them in conversation whenever possible. Finally to conclude our preparatory work, the heads of the *lien-pao*, *pao* and *chia* were invited to lunch and to visit the university campus and university agriculture experimental station in October, 1939. /22/ /23/

In early August in 1939 a group of physics students of the university was requested to assist in the mapping out of the physical site of the village. It was a real excitement to the village folks when these students together with our field investigators had their instru-

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ments in position in the village to start working. This was the first time that our village folks had a taste of the accuracy of modern scientific instruments. It was real magic to them, so they told us, when they found out that the distances established by these instruments were "equal" to the measures by their foot-steps.

While our village folks were still startled by this scientific mapping, a population census including age, sex, occupation, literacy and other items was begun. The method of direct inquiry was adopted whenever possible and the census unit was a family-household. Here our investigators met their first difficulty. Villagers refused to answer when they were asked. Naturally, our house-to-house canvass began with those families which were very friendly to the school principal. Whenever we were refused, our "liaison officer" explained the matter and said "uncle-so-and-so's family had already been enumerated." The indirect method, i.e., inquiring from neighboring families, was resorted to whenever direct inquiry failed us. When all enumerations were done, our figures were found to have discrepancies with the household records on file in the office of the *lien-pao* head.

Registration of births, deaths, marriages, and migrations soon followed the census enumeration. The work was done by the principal and every registration was checked by our field investigators. This work has been continuing for already more than two years.

Following the lead of social anthropologists, events of interest were begun to be recorded daily. We have on file at present the records of over 800 days. Meteorological data were provided by the Department of Physics of the University. Agricultural, economic, political, religious, educational and recreational activities as well as customs relating to births, marriages, deaths and health were altogether recorded in one blank-sheet. With these records from day to day, various aspects of life can be well correlated and their rhythms are well observed and noted.

At the very beginning of our investigations, it was found very necessary to have a chance for field investigators to exchange their experiences and to discuss their common problems. This was made possible by group conferences held weekly. Furthermore, each investigator was asked to record his observations as well as his own activities. All these records were on file for references. Besides, student-investigators were having frequent conferences with their major professors to clear up matters of theoretical and practical interest.

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123 to keep the two processes of participation and observation well balanced. In this connection, it is also very interesting to note that specific investigators are attracted to specific villagers. This attraction lies deep into their personality traits.

Before this note is concluded, one word may be added. While this is written, our field work is still in process. The present paper can be therefore taken only as a preliminary review. It is hoped, however, that it may serve as an introduction to the specialized papers which will appear in later issues of the *Journal*. The present paper is written also because we wish to have a chance to reflect on the work which was done in the last two years. Our work will be highly profited by comments from the social science public.

APPENDIX II: A NOTE ON POST-WAR DEVELOPMENT

122 The war came to an end on August 15, 1945, and the University reopened on its campus on October 10 of the same year. The principal of the village school came to inquire whether our research could be restored. I was then very much occupied with teaching and other work, and regretted very much that we could not resume our field work immediately but assured him that he would be informed of our decision in a few weeks' time. During the academic year of 1945-46 we paid three visits to the village, twice with two graduates of the Department of Sociology who were field workers there before the war, and once with an addition of an American student who was interested in sociology and just released from military service. In these three visits we were very warmly welcomed by our old friends, the villagers.

In the late summer of 1946, when the University in Chengtu rejoined those of us in Peiping, field work began to be resumed in a very small way. At first, a senior student went to the field. He was new to the village and was taken there by our assistant. He stayed on campus but made frequent trips to the village. It did not take a long time for him to get acquainted with the people of the village and he was soon able to concentrate on the problem of agricultural laborers. 121 A second senior student went to the field in January, 1947. He had visited the village in his junior year before the war, and it did not take much time for him to renew his personal acquaintances with the villagers. He finally concentrated on the problem

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PREFACE

This is issued as one of the studies which have been made possible through a subvention received from the Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York. It claims to be the first attempt in family budget inquiry in this country conducted for a period of six months, using the account-book method. Since its completion, two similar studies on a much larger scale have been commenced in Tientsin and Shanghai, both being conducted by co-operating bodies of this Department.

It is impossible for me to acknowledge my indebtedness to all who have helped me in preparing this book, but mention must be made of Mr. F. C. H. Lee who supervised the investigation, Mrs. S. C. Lee and Mrs. Y. F. Tung who took great pains in supplying the primary data for the present study, and Messrs. Shu-Hsung Wang, Kun-I Cheng and Wen-Tsin Chen who were responsible for all computation work.

I wish to express my deep gratitude to Dr. Franklin L. Ho, Professor of Statistics at the Nankai University, Tientsin, who has always been ready to put his expert knowledge at my disposal, to Dr. Hsien Wu, Professor of Bio-chemistry at the Peking Union Medical College, Peking, who has kindly supplied all the data on the food value, and to Dr. Y. T. Tsur, Director of the China Foundation, who has, in spite of his multifarious duties, read and greatly improved the text of this book. [p. 5]